

WASHINGTON, DC B Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Springfield) today introduced legislation to require drug companies to annually disclose the value, nature and purpose of any marketing or promotional gift over \$50 given to health professionals. Under the bill, the information would be made available to the public on the Food and Drug Administration's web site.

Americans are being gouged by pharmaceutical companies that spend more on marketing than they do on research and development,

@ said DeFazio.

They enjoy generous subsidies from the government, but have no accountability when it comes to the billions of dollars they spend promoting high priced drugs.

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A recent article in the New York Times detailed how two of the world's largest drug companies, [Amgen](#) and [Johnson & Johnson](#), paid doctors hundreds of millions of dollars in return for giving their patients [anemia](#) medicines, which federal regulators now say may be unsafe at commonly used doses.

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If the billions of dollars drug companies spend taking doctors on trips to the Caribbean and to expensive dinners at the country's finest restaurants are above-board, then the pharmaceutical industry should support my legislation,

@ continued DeFazio.

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There is a difference between educating doctors on the uses and effects of new drugs, and enticing healthcare professionals with lavish gifts.

This bill will keep the pharmaceutical industry honest.

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DeFazio=s legislation, the ADrug Company Gift Disclosure Act,@ amends the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetics Act to require each pharmaceutical manufacturer, packer and distributor to disclose any marketing and promotional gift over \$50 given to a health professional, including HMO pharmaceutical benefit managers.

Under the bill, health professionals include physicians, nurses, hospitals, nursing homes, pharmacists, HMOs, or any other person authorized to prescribe or dispense drugs.

The bill exempts free drug samples and scholarships for medical students.